

Emily Schell
Watson Internship Award – Summary of My Internship Experience



My summer at the National Committee on US-China Relations (NCUSCR) was nothing short of fantastic. I was given the opportunity to influence many of their educational programs (including congressional delegations to China), have a hands-on role in the Committee's largest fundraising campaign, and better understand the inner functioning of the Committee.

When I first arrived at the Committee, I was encouraged to voice my passions so that I could be paired with projects based on my interests. My first project

was creating a briefing book for NCUSCR's Student Leadership Exchange, which sends promising high school graduates to China to give them exposure to the superpower and its role in the world. I was given the task of providing these exchangees five news and/or academic articles on the following subjects: Chinese Politics; the U.S.-China Relationship; China's Geopolitical Relationships; Military/Security; Economics; Environment; and Hot Button Issues (which I could choose). While the task of summing up some of these incredibly important issues into five articles each seemed daunting, if not impossible, I was able to synthesize hundreds of pages of reading and knowledge into the top five most important discussions that someone with no previous experience on China should know. I was happy to be given the responsibility and task of creating the briefing book for the Student Leadership Exchange and then two other briefing books after that.

By helping the Development Office at the National Committee on its fundraising campaign, I was able to view the business and marketing underpinnings of a successful NGO firsthand. Seeing the sheer work and attention to detail that comes with running a multi-million dollar campaign has given me tools to improve my own fundraising efforts at Brown and better understand how NGOs work.

Working at the National Committee also allowed me to meet some of the preeminent leaders in the field of Sino-US relations – from previous Ambassador Nicholas Platt to famous Chinese and Hong Kong leaders, such as C.H. Tung. It was truly a privilege to be in conversations with these brilliant people, and I know that I have connections from this summer that will serve me well for a lifetime.

In short, my experience with the National Committee was wonderful and formative for my future career in US-China relations. I could not have lived in Manhattan (or even Brooklyn, where I ended up) without the Watson Internship Award, and so I am very grateful to the Watson Institute for giving me this incredible opportunity.